

The Messenger

By Phillip Rutledge

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Psalms 118:28-29 (NIV) ²⁸ You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you. ²⁹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Well, the days are getting cooler and nights are getting longer, the leaves are changing colour, pools are being closed, boaters and gardeners are cleaning up from summer. Out in the country the produce is ready to be gathered; combines run late into the night gathering the harvest, and then the fields are turned under as another growing season draws to a close. Thoughts of thanksgiving are upon us.

I remember, as a child, singing this song in Sunday school.

Can a little child like me
Thank the Father fittingly?
Yes, O yes! Be good and true,
Patient, kind in all you do;
Love the Lord, and do your part;
Learn to say with all your heart,
Father we thank thee.

Jesus loved the little children. How apropos that a children's song would reveal such powerful reminders for us this Thanksgiving.

Can a little child like me thank the Father fittingly? Absolutely! We are never too old... or too young to give thanks to God for the blessings in our lives. There is no time like the present to learn.

What else does this children's song bring to light about our relationship with God? It reminds us that we need to obey Him, speak God's truth and be patient and kind at everything we do and with everyone we meet. We need to love our Lord. We can accomplish this through prayer and the study of God's Word in the bible. Then by the grace of God, we will begin to develop a desire to serve as Jesus did; to become more like him. Finally, we should give thanks to God – not simply in a cordial manner but with ALL OUR HEART.

So, starting today – and every day, give thanks with the openness and sincerity of a child. If you're like me, you may need a little reminder for a while. Before the day gets too busy, this little prayer pops up on my computer screen to remind me that I have a lot to be thankful for and I need Jesus in my life always.

*Dear Lord,
Remind me to give You thanks in all circumstances and
help me to respond appropriately to the situations I find myself in today.*

Like the seeds the farmer plants in spring; it takes a full season for the plant to mature and bear fruit. So it is with us. Our season may be short or long but if we keep our eyes on Jesus we will all mature in God's perfect timing.

This year, as you seat yourselves around the table to enjoy your Thanksgiving dinner, in Jesus' name I pray you will give thanks with a grateful heart. - S.D.G.